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Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Fifty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 2 March 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing following the most recent Palestinian terrorist attack perpetrated against the citizens of Israel.

On Friday, 27 February 2004, at approximately 8 p.m. (local time), Palestinian terrorists perpetrated the deadly ambush of a car travelling on the Lahav-Ashkelon road, killing Eitan Kukoi, age 30, and his wife, Rima Novikov, age 25. The gunmen opened fire on the car from the side of the road and subsequently approached the vehicle after it had stopped and fired additional bursts from point-blank range to ensure that their victims were dead. The front windshield of the couple's car was found shattered and the entire vehicle perforated with bullet holes. The couple is survived by a two-year-old daughter.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Yasser Arafat's own Fatah Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades both claimed responsibility for the attack in statements released to the press. Just last Sunday, 22 February, the Fatah Al-Aqsa Brigades had claimed responsibility for a horrific homicidal attack on a crowded commuter bus in central Jerusalem that killed 8 people and wounded 73. In both this attack and Friday's deadly ambush on the Lahav-Ashkelon road, Palestinian terrorists succeeded by infiltrating an area where the security fence had not yet been completed. With each new Israeli victim of terror, it is all the more tragic that the security fence, the very counter-terrorist defensive measure that could have saved each passing life, is being challenged in the International Court of Justice. In areas currently protected by the security fence, the incidence of terrorist attacks has been significantly reduced.

As Friday's tragic attack indicates, the ongoing failure of the Palestinian Authority to take the strategic decision to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure and dissuade rampant incitement, as it is legally and morally obliged to do, continues to

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ravage the lives of innocent civilians and endanger efforts to build a new reality for the people of the region. The refusal of the Palestinian leadership to fulfil its counter-terrorist obligations constitutes a brazen violation of the most basic obligations of international law, human rights, Security Council resolutions and the road map.

Israel calls upon the international community to make clear to the Palestinian leadership and to those regimes sponsoring terrorism in the region its absolute rejection of terrorist tactics, and its acceptance of nothing less than the complete dismantling of terrorist organizations and relentless efforts to prevent terrorism and bring its perpetrators and supporters to justice, in accordance with international law, signed agreements between the parties, and Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1373 (2001). Only a unified and uncompromising stand against the perpetrators of these crimes — in all international and domestic forums — can bring an end to the Palestinian strategy of terrorism and violence and make peace between the peoples of the region possible. Rewards for the continuing Palestinian policy of intransigence and terror, in the form of political concessions or the toleration of one-sided initiatives in the organs of the United Nations, can only embolden the terrorists and undermine efforts aimed at achieving a peaceful settlement.

I submit the present letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism launched in September 2000, which document the crimes for which the terrorists and their supporters must be held fully accountable.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 156 and 67, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative